

01FN046US

AFTER FINAL: EXPEDITED ACTION

02230028aa

Amendment dated 04/28/2004

Reply to office action mailed 03/11/2004

The following is a complete listing of all claims in the application, with an indication of the status of each:

Listing of claims:

- 1 1. (previously presented) A magneto-resistance effect element comprising:
 - 2 a lower conductive layer;
 - 3 a free layer provided on the lower conductive layer and having an orientation of magnetization varied by a magnetic field applied thereto;
 - 4 a non-magnetic layer provided on top of the free layer;
 - 5 a fixed layer provided on the non-magnetic layer and having a pinned orientation of magnetization;
 - 6 a vertical bias layer, provided on said lower conductive layer, for applying a magnetic field to said free layer, and said free layer is greater in length in the direction of a magnetic field applied thereto by said vertical bias layer than said fixed layer, and a sense current for detecting a change in electrical resistance of said non-magnetic layer flows substantially in perpendicular relation to said non-magnetic layer, and
 - 7 an underlying layer for said free layer provided under said free layer, and said underlying layer for said free layer being in contact with said free layer and said vertical bias layer.
- 1 2. (original) The magneto-resistance effect element according to claim 1, wherein said lower conductive layer has a recessed portion on an upper surface thereof, and said vertical bias layer is provided so as to allow at least part thereof to be buried in said recessed portion.

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1 3. (original) The magneto-resistance effect element according to claim 1,
2 wherein at least part of said free layer is in direct contact with said vertical
3 bias layer.

1 4. (canceled)

1 5. (previously presented) The magneto-resistance effect element according to
2 claim 1, further comprising a vertical bias layer protective layer provided on
3 said vertical bias layer, and said vertical bias layer protective layer being in
4 contact with said vertical bias layer, and said vertical bias layer protective
5 layer being in contact with at least one of said free layer and said underlying
6 layer for said free layer.

1 6. (currently amended) A magneto-resistance effect element comprising:
2 a lower conductive layer;
3 a magnetic layer provided on the lower conductive layer;
4 a free layer provided on the magnetic layer and having an orientation
5 of magnetization varied by a magnetic field coupled magnetically to the
6 magnetic layer and applied thereto;
7 a non-magnetic layer provided on the free layer;
8 a fixed layer provided on the non-magnetic layer and having a pinned
9 orientation of magnetization; and
10 a vertical bias layer, provided on said lower conductive layer, for
11 applying a magnetic field to said free layer, and said magnetic layer is greater
12 in length in the direction of a magnetic field applied thereto by said vertical
13 bias layer than said free layer, and a sense current for detecting a change in
14 electrical resistance of said non-magnetic layer flows substantially in
15 perpendicular relation to said non-magnetic layer, and

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16 wherein an underlying said magnetic layer for said free layer provided
17 under said free layer, and said underlying layer for said free layer being is in
18 contact with said free layer and said vertical bias layer.

1 7. (original) The magneto-resistance effect element according to claim 6,
2 wherein said magnetic layer is magnetically coupled to said free layer by anti-
3 ferromagnetic coupling or ferromagnetic coupling.

1 8. (original) The magneto-resistance effect element according to claim 6,
2 wherein said lower conductive layer has a recessed portion on an upper
3 surface thereof, and said vertical bias layer is provided so as to allow at least
4 part thereof to be buried in said recessed portion.

1 9. (original) The magneto-resistance effect element according to claim 6,
2 wherein at least part of said free layer is in direct contact with said vertical
3 bias layer.

Claims 10-63. (canceled).